

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 remain present in this application.

The specification has been amended. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by GANAPATHY et al., U.S. Patent 6,411,953 B1. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

First, the Examiner has asserted that GANAPATHY discloses a method of interactive image retrieval based on user specified regions (regions are specified based on luminance and chrominance components which are used for the extraction of color-based information...). In the present application, however, the "specified regions" mean the regions are selected and specified by users, not specified based on any image feature. Accordingly, the method of specifying regions of the present application and GANAPATHY are completely different.

Accordingly, with regard to claims 1 and 10, GANAPATHY does not teach or suggest what the examiner relies upon it as supposedly teaching.

In addition, GANAPATHY fails to disclose, suggest, or teach, inter alia, the "dividing the sample image into a plurality of regions," as required in independent claim 1 of the present application.

Column 8, lines 1-11 of GANAPATHY disclose that "it decomposes an image map into luminance and chrominance components...". It is clear that GANAPATHY extracts color features (luminance and chrominance components) of images. The present application, however, separates an image into several parts (regions or objects) by using edge detection, color quantization, region splitting and merging, and region growing methods. For example, if an image contains a butterfly and a flower, the image is divided into two regions, respectively containing the butterfly and the flower.

Further, in GANAPATHY, the whole image should be performed feature extraction. In the present application, however, only the specified regions should be performed feature extraction.

GANAPATHY also fails to disclose, suggest, or teach, inter alia, "...defining corresponding logic operators," as required in independent claims 1 and 10 of the present application.

Column 3, lines 2-6 of the GANAPATHY patent disclose that "[t]he rule in the grammar may include equal pattern, overall appearance, similar pattern, and dominant color and general impression, with each of the rules expressed as a logical combination of values...". In GANAPATHY, the logical combination is a condition for retrieving images, in which the condition is composed of the rules, such as equal pattern, overall appearance, similar pattern, and dominant color and general impression. In the present application, however, the purpose of defining logic

operators is to define what region should be considered for image retrieving. For example, the user selects the regions A and B in the appending diagram 2 and defines the logic operators to be "(A) and (not B)". This indicates that the image to be retrieved is the butterfly but not the flower. The purpose of the operators of the invention and the logical combination of GANAPATHY is different from that of the present application.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the prior art utilized by the Examiner fails to teach or disclose the method of the present application, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 10, as well as their dependent claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 102(e) rejection are respectfully requested.

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

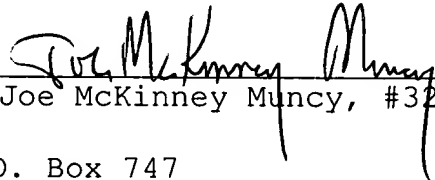
Because the additional prior art cited by the Examiner has been included merely to show the state of the prior art and has not been utilized to reject the claims, no further comments concerning these documents are considered necessary at this time.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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